

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims have been amended by rewriting Claim 1 and canceling Claims 3, 13-14 and 17-21. Claims 1-2, 5-10 and 15 remain in the application. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and these remarks/arguments.

Allowed Claims:

Applicants acknowledge that the Examiner has allowed Claims 8-10 and 15 over the prior art of record.

Allowable Subject Matter:

The Examiner has objected to Claim 3 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but states that it would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all other limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have, accordingly, cancelled Claim 3 and amended the base claim, Claim 1, to include the limitations of Claim 3, thereby rendering Claim 1 in a condition for allowance. Moreover, Claims 2 and 5-7 now depend from and include all of the limitations of allowable Claim 1 and are, therefore, likewise in a condition for allowance.

Rejected Claims:

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 2, 5-7, 13-14, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Larsen, et al. (WO 96/19887). As argued above, based on the above amendments to Claim 1, Applicants submit that Claim 1 and Claims 2 and 5-7, which depend from Claim 1, are now in a condition for allowance. Applicants have cancelled Claims 13-14 and 21, thereby rendering moot the Examiner's rejection of these claims.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 17-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Larsen in view of Wornell, et al. (USPN 5,285,478). Applicants have cancelled Claims 17-20, thereby rendering moot the Examiner's rejection of these claims.

The Applicants note the art cited, but not relied upon by the Examiner.

No amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated herein. No amendment made was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any

claim, unless Applicants have argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular reference or combination of references.

The Applicants believe that the subject application, as amended, is in condition for allowance. Such action is earnestly solicited by the Applicants.

In the event that the Examiner deems the present application non-allowable, it is requested that the Examiner telephone the Applicants' attorney or agent at the number indicated below so that the prosecution of the present case may be advanced by the clarification of any continuing rejection.

Accordingly, this application is believed to be in proper form for allowance and an early notice of allowance is respectfully requested.


Please charge any fees associated herewith, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 502117.

SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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Respectfully submitted,

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